

## Children's Material

### **MUSLIM WORLD: Standing firm in Christ**



Asia Bibi is a Christian woman in Pakistan who has been in jail since June 2009. She has a husband and two daughters, Isha, age 13, and Isem, age 10. Asia worked on a farm near their home in Pakistan. Her boss was a Muslim, and so were the other women who worked on the farm with her. In fact, only three Christian families lived in the whole town. Everyone else was Muslim.

One day at work, the Muslim women told Asia about Islam, the religion of Muslims. Asia told the Muslims that Christ died on the cross for our sins and that He rose again and is alive. She told them that Mohammad, the man who started Islam, was not a true prophet.

The Muslim women were angry at Asia, and they hit her. Some Muslim leaders wanted to make Asia ride through the village on a donkey as punishment. Instead, the police put Asia in jail. It is against the law in Pakistan to insult Islam or Mohammad. Leaders insisted that Asia had broken the law.

Isha, Isem, and their father missed Asia very much. One day, officials let them visit her for about 15 minutes before she went to a court hearing. Asia told her visitors that she prayed every day at 3 a.m. in the jail. She thanked God that the guards had not hurt her. But she missed her family very much.

### **Pray!**

- Pray that Asia will be released from prison soon so she can return home to her family.
- Pray that Christians like Asia will stand firm in their faith even when it is very difficult.
- Pray that God will encourage Asia's husband and two daughters. Pray that their faith in Jesus will continue to grow.
- Pray that many more people in Pakistan will learn about Jesus and turn to Him.

**Activity: Write a letter of encouragement to Asia Bibi**

Have you ever received a letter or card in the mail? If so, isn't it exciting to open the envelope and see what's inside?

You can encourage Asia Bibi by sending her a letter! Imagine how she might feel to receive a note of encouragement from a Christian like you, reminding her that you care and are praying for her!

Write a letter with your family or Sunday school class. You can include a drawing, or perhaps a photo of you, your family, your pet, or a picture of the beautiful scenery where you live.

Here is a sample of what you can write:

*Dear Asia Bibi,*

*My name is [your first name] and I live in [the country where you live]. I am writing you today to let you know that I am praying for you and your family!*

*May God bless and keep you!*

*From,  
[your first name]*

Mail your letters to:

Asia Bibi  
District Jail  
Sheikhupura  
Punjab  
Pakistan



## COMMUNIST WORLD:

### A family vanishes

Very few North Korean children know about Jesus and God. But 10-year-old Hyun Joo was different. She believed in God and trusted Him.

Hyun Joo's parents were Christians. Many North Korean Christians do not talk about God with their children. If the children mention God outside the home, government officials might punish the whole family. The government wants the citizens to honour the country's leaders, not God.

But Hyun Joo's parents wanted her to know Jesus. They prayed that God would use her to change North Korea.

North Korea's leaders do not allow just anybody to leave the country for visits. They do not want them to find out how much better life is in other places.

Hyun Joo's family secretly left North Korea to attend a hidden Bible class in another country. It was a risky trip. But the police did not catch them.



After two weeks of Bible training, the family quietly returned home. As they left, Hyun Joo said to the Bible teacher, "Pray that I will not lose my joy until heaven." (The picture of Hyun Joo was taken at the Bible class. Her face is covered to protect her identity.)

Hyun Joo continued to believe in God, and she worked hard at school. She was happy when she came home from school one day.

She told her mother, Hee Sook, that she had prayed "inside her heart" at school. Hee Sook was pleased with Hyun Joo's faith. She asked Hyun Joo's aunt, Mrs. Kim, to join her in praying for Hyun Joo.

The next day Mrs. Kim returned to Hyun Joo's house for a visit. The house was empty, and the family had vanished.

A friend later told Mrs. Kim what had happened. Hyun Joo's teacher had asked her, "How did you get such a good grade on your test?"

"By God's grace," Hyun Joo answered.

The teacher was angry. She dragged Hyun Joo out of the classroom. Then her family disappeared. The government no doubt took them away. No one has heard from them since.

**Pray!**

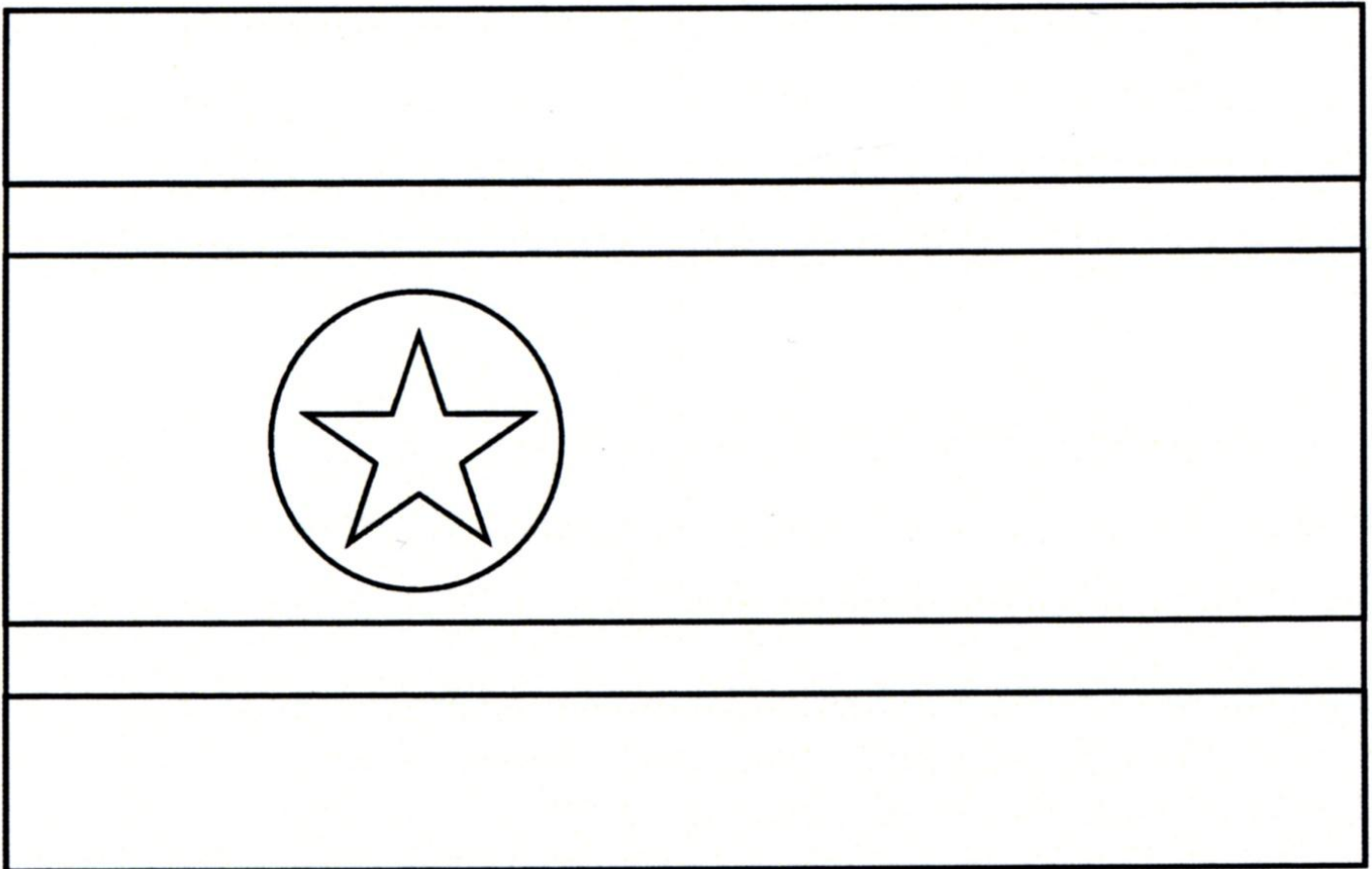
Someday we might learn where Hyun Joo and her family are. But even if we don't, we can still be part of an answer to their prayer. Now that you have learned Hyun Joo's story, it can help you remember to pray for change in North Korea. The Bible says, "The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective" (James 5:16). Pray that the leaders of North Korea will love good and hate evil.

- Pray that God's Word will continue to spread and that enemies will be powerless to stop it.
- Ask God to comfort and take care of North Korean Christians.

**Activity: Colour North Korea's flag**



Colour in the North Korean flag below, using the flag to the left as a guide. After colouring, cut the flag out and hang it up in your bedroom or Sunday school classroom to remind you to pray for Christians in North Korea.



## **HINDU WORLD: Repaying evil with good**

**Memory verse:** *"Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good" (Romans 12:21).*

Akhaya and Sudhamani are Christian farm workers in Orissa, a state in India. They have three daughters and one son. Their 10-year-old daughter, Namrata, taught the world a lesson about forgiveness when her story was in the news.

Radical Hindus in Orissa recently attacked Christian families and property. When the violence began Akhaya and Sudhamani left their home, a wooden shack, to hide in the forest. They sent Namrata and their other children to hide with their oldest daughter Trusita. Trusita worked as a live-in housekeeper for a Christian family. Radical Hindus attacked the house. The children hid in a bathroom. The Hindus left, but they put a bomb in a dresser drawer on their way out.



The Christians left the house after the attackers were gone, except Namrata. She was curious and wanted to explore the damages. The bomb exploded and Namrata got hurt. Akhaya and Sudhamani returned the next day. They took Namrata to the hospital where the doctors helped her heal.

Many other Christians were hurt in the Orissa attacks. The Hindus brought them trouble, pain, and sorrow. No one would have blamed Namrata if she chose to be angry and miserable.

She chose another way. "We forgive the Hindu radicals who attacked us," she said. "They were out of their minds. They do not know the love of Jesus. For this reason, I now want to study so that when I am older, I can tell everyone how much Jesus loves us.... I feel very loved by the people of India and by so many people in the world who have ... prayed for me."

### **Pray!**

Repaying evil with good is not always easy. Pray for Akhaya, Sudhamani, Trusita, Namrata, and the other Christians in India who have been persecuted. Ask God to continue to give them strength to overcome the evil around them with good.

- Pray for the other Christians who were attacked in Orissa, India. Pray that they will be strong in their faith and that God will provide for their needs.
- Pray that children in India will grow in their love of Jesus and understanding of the Bible.

**Activity: Learn about Hinduism**

God has made us with a longing in our hearts to be close to Him (see Acts 17:26-27 and Ecclesiastes 3:11). Hindus feel that longing, too. But they do not believe, or have not been told, that the way to be close to God is through His Son Jesus. So they try to fill that longing with other gods, rituals, and works.

	<b>Hindu teachings</b>	<b>Christian</b>
<b>God</b>	Hindus believe in one main god, called Brahman. Some Hindus pick one god to be their own special god. But Hindu teachings tell of many gods.	There is one God. "The Lord our God, the Lord is one!" (See Deuteronomy 6:4).
<b>Relationship</b>	Hindus do not believe their gods are like fathers to those who worship them.	Our Father, God, loves us as His children. "I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty" (2 Corinthians 6:18).
<b>Holy book</b>	Hindus respect many Hindu writings. The "Vedas" are a collection of sacred writings. The Bhagavad-Gita is a respected book of stories.	The Bible is the Word of God. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God" (2 Timothy 3:16).
<b>Life after death</b>	Hindus believe in "reincarnation" – the belief that after people die, they can come back to life again as other people or animals. "Karma" is the belief that the way someone behaved in a former life determines what they will be in the next life.	After a person's life on earth ends, there is a judgment. "It is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment" (Hebrews 9:27). Believers enjoy unbroken fellowship with God for eternity (see Psalm 16:11).
<b>Salvation</b>	Salvation for Hindus means freedom from being reborn again and again. They believe they become part of their main god when their cycle of birth and death ends. Some of the ways Hindus try to get closer to this "salvation" include rituals, good works, meditation, yoga, and the worship of gods.	The only way to eternal life is by God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ. Jesus said, "No one comes to the Father except through Me" (John 14:6).

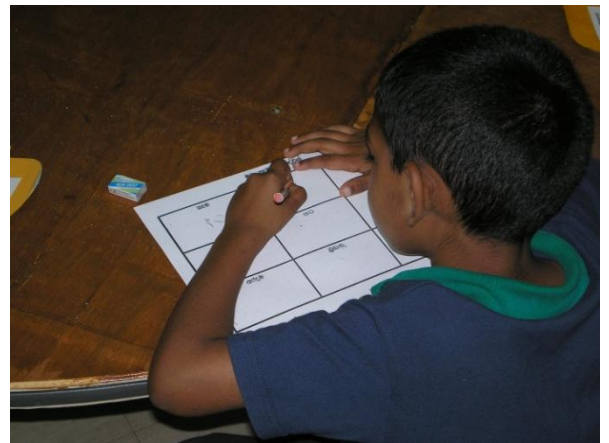
## **BUDDHIST WORLD:**

### **Paul's story**

When Paul was 12 years old, he was doing well in school. He was at the top of his class and was respected by his fellow students. But that all changed when a new principal came to the school! One day in class this principal pointed to Paul and said, "You're Christian!" in an angry way, as if he was accusing Paul of committing a crime. From then on, he did not treat Paul fairly. He would mock him too. Eventually Paul left the school because of the principal's behaviour.

Now, years later, Paul has a deep passion to help persecuted Christian children. Paul has volunteered at a camp for Christian children in Sri Lanka—a camp that he attended when he was younger and that really helped him grow in his faith. The camp gave Paul a place to talk about his problems and share them freely. He also found that the leaders were of great help to him. "I was reminded that I am not alone in my struggles. I am loved and supported by other believers and friends."

Paul has also started a youth ministry with a friend. His goal is to help Christian kids make use of their God-given talents and skills, such as ministry, music, and teaching.



*A child at the camp where Paul volunteered*

Paul praises the Lord for enriching his life. He and his family still face challenges. His father has been ministering for 22 years to poor communities, so they do not have a lot of money. But Paul draws his strength from God. His favourite verse is Philippians 4:13, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

### **Discuss:**

1. Have you ever been mistreated for being a Christian? How did you react? How do you think Jesus would have wanted you to respond?
2. What do you think are your God-given talents and skills? Ask your family or friends what they think your talents and skills are. Thank God for giving you these gifts, and ask Him to help you learn how you can use them to praise Him!
3. Do you have a favourite Bible verse? Share it with a friend and explain what it means to you.

**Activity: Decode the Bible verse**

About 70 percent of the people in Sri Lanka are Buddhists. The constitution says Buddhism has the “foremost place” in Sri Lanka. “Foremost” means “most important” or “ranked above all others.” About 12 percent of Sri Lankan citizens are Hindus. Hinduism is the main religion of India, Sri Lanka’s neighbour to the north.

Christians know God cares about them and their daily needs (1 Peter 5:7, Matthew 6:11, 31-32). Buddhists honour Buddha, but they don’t believe they can have a personal relationship with him or that he cares about their daily lives. Sri Lankan Buddhists in everyday life worry about sickness, their relatives, money problems, school, and other things. They don’t know, or don’t believe, that they can have a close relationship with the all-powerful God through His Son Jesus Christ.

So they pray for help to false gods and goddesses worshipped by their ancestors. They use charms to try to ward off evil. Astrology, horoscopes, and superstitions are important parts of their lives. Many Sri Lankan Buddhists have even come to accept Hindu gods as their own gods. Many Buddhists and Hindus are upset that Christianity is growing in Sri Lanka. Christian churches have been attacked by both Hindu mobs and Buddhist mobs.

Christians who spread the gospel in Sri Lanka have many enemies, just as Jesus did when He walked on earth. Use the graph below to decode the partial Bible verse below the graph. The verse tells something Jesus said about dealing with enemies. Read the complete verse to learn what else Jesus said.

	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Q</b>	A	E	I	M	Q	U	Y
<b>R</b>	B	F	J	N	R	V	Z
<b>S</b>	C	G	K	O	S	W	
<b>T</b>	D	H	L	P	T	X	

D O  
 T1 S4                      S2 S4 S4 T1                      T5 S4

T5 T2 S4 S5 Q2                      S6 T2 S4

T2 Q1 T5 Q2                      Q7 S4 Q6

Q4 Q1 T5 T5 T2 Q2 S6                      5:44

## OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD:

### Good news in Chiapas, Mexico

**Memory Verse:** *"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news" (Isaiah 52:7).*

Religious freedom is usually respected in Mexico. But "traditionalists" in Chiapas sometimes persecute those who do not want to celebrate their festivals and follow their customs. Traditionalists follow some Catholic teachings. But they mix the teachings with practices from the ancient Mayan religion, which do not follow the Bible.



*The Tzeltal kids praising God*

A church in Chiapas invited children from the Tzeltal (sehl-TAHL) tribe to a celebration. A group of about 30 Tzeltal children from a mountain village came down the mountain to attend the service. The girls were dressed in their best dresses. The boys were dressed up, too. But they were all barefoot – in December.

Their pastor used to teach his Tzeltal congregation traditionalists ways. Then he read the Bible. He began to share Bible truths with his people. Traditionalist leaders were angry when the people stopped following traditionalist customs. The traditionalists threatened to harm the pastor and his group.

The children in the group were happy to be able to visit other Christian children who loved Jesus. But the Tzeltal people are poor. The families used up all their money on clothes and transportation to the celebration. No money was left for shoes.

The children sang for their new Christian friends down the mountain. Later a group from the church took shoes and sandals up the mountain. They washed the children's feet, measured them, and put new shoes on them. The Christians who brought the shoes were thankful for the songs of praise the Tzeltal children shared with them at the celebration. The Tzeltal children were grateful for their new shoes.

### **Pray!**

It can be very difficult sometimes to stand up for your beliefs! Pray that believers in Chiapas will stand up for what the Bible teaches.

- Pray that other traditionalists in Chiapas will read the Bible and share God's truth with others.
- Pray that children in Chiapas will share God's good news and encourage one another in their faith.

**Activity: Make "flip flops" prayer reminders**

Children in Mexico made "flip flops" as reminders to pray for persecuted Christians. (See the photo below. The names of the countries and Bible references are in Spanish.)

Make your own "flip flops" prayer reminder! Cut shoe shaped pieces out of foam or coloured paper, and glue ribbons to them to make your own "flip flops." Pray for those with "beautiful feet" who take the good news of Jesus to difficult places.

